

Remarks by President Donald Tusk at the press conference of the Valletta summit on migration

Good afternoon. We have had two days of frank and productive discussions here in Valletta on the important subject of migration. I would like to thank all those who attended the Summit for their commitment to address migration together. Seizing the opportunities and facing the challenges of migration require us to work together. None of us can manage the phenomenon on our own. This is why we wanted to hold this dialogue.

What we have agreed is a crucial step in reinforcing our cooperation. We have adopted a Political Declaration and a Valletta Action Plan. We now need to get moving on implementing it, in partnership and solidarity.

The elements of the Action Plan are designed to:

- One, address the root causes of migration;
- Two, enhance cooperation on legal migration and mobility;
- Three, reinforce protection of displaced persons;
- Four, prevent and fight against migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings; and
- Five, advance on returning persons that are not entitled to stay in Europe.

Those are the goals. What is equally, or maybe even more important, is that we have agreed a long list of very concrete actions to be implemented by the end of 2016. Let me mention a few examples:

- We will launch projects to enhance employment opportunities in regions of origin and transit of migrants in East, North and West Africa.
- We will double the number of scholarships for students and researchers through the Erasmus+ programme.
- We will establish Regional Development and Protection Programmes in the Horn of Africa and North Africa by mid-2016.
- We will set up a joint investigation team in Niger against migrant smuggling and trafficking as a pilot project; possibly to be used in other countries or regions if useful.
- We will facilitate returns, preferably voluntary, by a number of concrete steps, such as African immigration officials travelling to Europe to help verify and identify the nationalities of irregular migrants.

And to help implement what we have agreed, we have launched the EU Trust Fund with a minimum of 1.8 billion euros. This comes on top of EU and Member States' development assistance to African countries of 20 billion euros every year.

We are under no illusions that we can improve the situation overnight. But we are committed to giving people alternatives to risking their lives.

Lastly, let me again thank all colleagues for the constructive inputs before and during the Summit. And thank Prime Minister Muscat for hosting us here in Malta. Thank you.